

MINUTES OF THE COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

JANUARY 17, 2014

A meeting of the Commission for Human Rights was held on Friday, January 17, 2014. It started at 9:36 in the agency hearing room. The Commissioners held a Public Hearing to receive comments on a proposed regulation. Present at the hearing were Commissioners John B. Susa, Chair, Iraida Williams, Camille Vella-Wilkinson and Rochelle Bates Lee. Absent were Commissioners Alberto Aponte Cardona, Esq., Nancy Kolman Ventrone and Alton W. Wiley, Jr., Esq. The Commissioners went to the agency conference room to proceed with the regular Commission meeting. The meeting commenced at 9:50 a.m.

A Motion to approve the minutes of December 13, 2013 was made by Commissioner Lee. The Motion was seconded by Commissioner Williams and carried.

Status Report of Michael D. Évora, Executive Director

A written report was handed out. All new information is in bold print.

Case Production Report – Attached

Aged Case Report – No aged cases to report.

Outreach Report – Attached

STATUS REPORT – COMMISSIONERS

GENERAL STATUS: The Commissioners are continuing to serve while waiting for information on Commissioner Re-appointments.

Commissioners commended the Executive Director, Michael D. Evora for his quickness in working on and distributing the Annual Report.

Commissioner Meeting -2- January 17, 2014

OUTREACH: Commissioner Vella-Wilkinson reported that she is working with the State to increase walkability on the sidewalks in Warwick.

STATUS REPORT – LEGAL COUNSEL: by Cynthia M. Hiatt and Francis Gaschen

LITIGATION: Report attached all new information in bold

LEGISLATION: Legal Counsel Hiatt handed out the final draft for the language on the amendments to the Fair Employment Practices Act.

Attorney Hiatt reported that the Steven Brown of the ACLU would like the Commission to oppose a Constitutional Convention. The Commissioners decided to discuss it further at the next meeting after further information is provided.

Attorney Hiatt discussed legislation which had been recently introduced.

REGULATIONS: The Commissioners discussed the Public Hearing on the proposed Fair Housing regulation on representation by Commission Counsel.

DECISIONS: The Commission ruled on a Motion To Stay in Yangambi vs. Providence School Department.

Commissioner Meeting -3- January 17, 2014

STATUS OF HEARING CASES/HEARING SCHEDULE: Discussed

**The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m. The next regular meeting will be on
Friday, February 28, 2014.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael D. Évora
Executive Director

Notes taken by B. Ross

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S
REPORT TO COMMISSIONERS
17 January 2014**

I. BUDGET

S = State/General Revenue; F = Federal (EEOC/HUD); T = Total

	FY 2014 (Enacted)	FY 2014 (Rev.Req.)	FY 2014 (Gov. Rec.)	FY 2015 (Unconstr.)	FY 2015 (Constr.)	FY 2015 (Recomm.)
S	1,150,785	1,150,785	1,146,066	1,184,229	1,095,286	1,193,083
F	308,638	318,987	317,367	303,788	318,035	287,096
T	1,459,423	1,469,772	1,463,433	1,488,017	1,413,321	1,480,179

The Commission's FY 14 (Revised) and FY 15 (Proposed) Budgets were submitted to the Governor on September 11. The submission included a Budget Impact Statement detailing the consequences to

be realized should the seven percent general revenue decrease requested of all state agencies be implemented for the Commission [see Constrained Budget above].

The Governor has submitted his formal recommendation in respect to the Commission's FY 2014 budget, as noted above. In addition, he has submitted an FY 2015 recommended budget to the General Assembly. That budget, noted above, would fund the Commission at an unconstrained level for FY 2015 and would provide funding for the Commission's current staffing of 14.5 FTEs.

II. FEDERAL CONTRACTS

EEOC – For federal FY 2012 (beginning October 1, 2011), according to EEOC Project Director Marlene Toribio, we closed 237 co-filed cases.

Our contract with EEOC for FY 2012 was for 235 cases. For federal FY 2013 (beginning October 1, 2012), we closed 201 co-filed cases. Our contract with EEOC for FY13 was for 199 cases. For federal FY14 (beginning October 1, 2013), we have closed 63 co-filed cases; our contract is as yet unknown.

HUD – For FY12, according to HUD Project Director Angela Lovegrove, we took in 40 new housing charges, 37 of which were co-filed with HUD. Within this same time period, we processed 45 housing charges, 43 of which were co-filed with HUD. For FY13 (July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013), we took in 51 new housing charges, all of which were co-filed with HUD. Within this same time period, we

processed 50 cases, 47 of which were co-filed with HUD. For FY14 (beginning July 1, 2013), we have taken in 20 new housing charges, 19 of which are co-filed with HUD. Within this same time period, we have processed 26 cases, 25 of which were co-filed with HUD.

HUD APPROVES TWO PARTNERSHIP PROPOSALS – The Commission recently was advised that HUD approved our applications for Partnership Funds for two fair housing projects. The first grant, for approximately \$56,000, is for a targeted outreach (including development of training/education materials) to the LGBT community and victims of domestic violence. The second grant, for \$2,650.00, will be used to plan and conduct a seminar on mortgage lending discrimination and predatory lending in the month of April 2014; the event will be open to the public with invitations to groups including the RI Association of Realtors and local financial institutions. We await a formal contract amendment from HUD to access the funds to begin implementation of these projects.

III. PERSONNEL

No new information.

IV. OUTREACH – Refer to attached report.

V. GENERAL STATUS

●Meetings with staff members – I continue to meet monthly with individual investigative staff members to monitor case production.

●Case Closures – Refer to attached report.

We ended FY 2012 slightly behind the prior fiscal year's case processing rate. In FY 2011, we processed 422 cases; in FY 2012, we processed 411 cases (approx. 3.5% decrease). For FY13, we processed 389 cases (approx. 5% decrease from FY12). For FY14 (beginning July 1, 2013), we have processed 182 cases (compare to 188 cases in this same time period in FY13).

●Aged Cases – There are no aged cases in the Commission's inventory for federal fiscal year 2014 (beginning October 1, 2013).

●Overall Case Inventory – The Commission had over 1000 cases in its inventory at the end of FY 1998. We ended FY11 with 323 cases in inventory, FY12 with 255 cases, and FY13 with 265 cases. As of 1/14/14, we had a total of 273 cases in inventory; none of these cases was pending assignment.

●Performance Management Initiative – On July 16, 2013, I met with the Governor's Performance Management Team to discuss the Commission's agreed-upon performance goals. The Team noted that the Commission is one of the only state agencies that consistently complies with the Performance Management Directive in a

complete/timely manner. These meetings will occur quarterly.

●Annual Report – The Commission’s FY13 Annual Report has been received. Copies were mailed to designated state and federal officials and community organizations in late December.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael D. Évora

Executive Director

Attachments